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PHILOSOPHY IN RELATION TO AGNOSTICISM AND TO RELIGION.

BY R. A. HOLLAND.

It is alike the boast of those who doubt, and the lamentation of those who believe, that our age is sceptical. Its scepticism is not confined to philosophy, but pervades literature and household thought. As its philosophy is without certitude, so its poetry is a dispute of two voices, or,

“An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry;”

while its popular mood seems to be one of indifference, though not so indifferent as it seems, to all absolute aims, destitute of which it tries, but vainly tries, to find a law of right in utility, and a test of utility in pleasure. Nor is religion exempt from the prevalent scepticism. Religion is not only doubted by the unreligious, but, if I may use such an expression, doubts itself. It has lost the simple faith that never asked for proofs. It is dissatisfied with the proofs which, at a later period, when faith had begun to fear, were sufficient to tranquillize and confirm it; and, though still holding the creed of early days as the staff its very life leans on, holds it with an uneasy clutch rather than with a calm grasp of assurance. For Religion, like recent Philosophy, is suspicious of Reason, and tends to agnosticism. And which kind of agnosticism is the worse it would be hard to tell—that of Philosophy, which quits the search for God, or that of Religion, which despairs of finding Him otherwise than by accident of outward authority or by blind brute-like feeling. I say “accident of outward authority,” because all authorities as such are equally authoritative, and he, who does not by reason choose which among them he will submit to as the most rational, submits to accident. I say “blind brute-like feeling,” because feeling as such knows not the character of its object, whereas it is the divineness of this character—which reason, comparing it with the low and gross, alone can recognize

—that distinguishes the feelings it excites as religious rather than animal. For feelings as feelings have no distinction among themselves except that of greater or less intensity; and hence, inasmuch as an error may be as intensely felt as a truth, fanaticism would be the only sign of true religion. Not that Religion is to be unfelt any more than authority is to be despised, but that both its feeling and its submission to authority imply rational discrimination. It cannot shun Reason even if it would. Had it never doubted, it might have lived on in primitive simplicity of faith, but the doubt, once excited, can be allayed only by reason. If bidden not to reason, Religion must have a reason for not reasoning. Distrust of the Reason it would renounce is trust in the Reason that prompts the renunciation. Its very flight to Feeling and Authority seeks them as a more *reasonable* way of knowing God than the way of Reason itself. German folk-lore tells of a hare who fancied he could easily outrun a clumsy hedgehog. The hedgehog having stationed his wife, “who was exactly like himself,” at one end of the course, he and the hare started from the other with a dense hedge between them all the way. When nearing the end of the course, the hare, who thought his competitor far behind, was surprised by a voice in advance, which said, “Here I am before you.” Meanwhile, his competitor, who had run but a little way and then retired to the starting-point, was awaiting the returning race; and, when the hare came flying back, greeted him with the same salute—“Here I am before you.” Again and again the challenge was renewed, but whether the hare ran back or forth, the hedgehog’s voice was always before him. The story is a fable of Faith, whose efforts to outrun Reason always meet Reason at the end of the race.

Religion, then, cannot deny the jurisdiction of Philosophy without denying its own right to exist. Its problem is the problem of Philosophy, its destiny the destiny of Philosophy. And this requirement that Religion should become philosophic, and Philosophy religious, is the import of modern Scepticism, whose wide extent and radical questioning are its most hopeful signs. For, if it were the doubt of a few individuals, or of a school of thought, it might be attributed to caprice or to chance of association, and would have no rational significance. But the doubt of an Age, expressed alike in its philosophy, religion, and common life, must

have some reason for its existence in the mind of man as man. Now, all rational doubt is relative. It marks the transition of the general mind from a less to a more perfect comprehension of truth. It is the necessary motion and growth of Thought, which never leaves wonted beliefs except for ideas that transcend them, and in whose transcendency they are found again, as it were, risen from the dead and glorified. It comes to fulfil, not to destroy. Seeing that the reason of the Present is born of the reason of the Past, it regards the Past with filial reverence. The principle of heredity does not lead it to expect wisdom as the most probable offspring of a pedigree of folly. Progress, it knows, is by preservation as well as by acquisition. As the shell-fish outgrows its shell only to enlarge it with new and wider whorls, so, if rational, the doubt that leaves old forms of faith leaves them only to add new and grander forms in one consistent development of truth. Moreover, the radical reach of the doubt gauges the importance of the faith it anticipates.

The questions of the ages are a Nilometer that marks the depth of Thought's current through time, and its promise of an overflow that shall fertilize all barren places of the mind. In these questions the reason of the race has uttered its sense of contradiction between an implicit standard of truth and customary beliefs. So much as any age assumed, so much did it leave outside of thought, and, consequently, outside of knowledge. Only by taking it up and transforming it into thought can the mind know whether what seems to be knowledge is true or false, is knowledge or ignorance.

Now, all the ages of Christian civilization before ours, whatever else they may have doubted, have assumed the Absolute. They have questioned neither an absolute object of knowledge, nor that such an object could be absolutely known. Individual thinkers may have puzzled over this problem, but the popular mind did not. It has come, however, into the consciousness of our time, and, with its coming, brought the fear that what the Past had taken as absolute was indeed relative and finite. Hence the depth of that sense of contradiction which does not merely array against each other certain truths, like faith and works, grace and freedom, authority and private judgment, but goes to the very bottom of knowledge, cleaving it asunder as with a Ginunga-gap. How can

knowledge exist, it cries, in such utter self-opposition? How can antagonistic truths be equally true? How can the infinite be in finite and not finite when, if not finite, it is set over against the finite as that which limits it, and so proves it finite after all? How can the mind, which knows only its own states, know that there is a real world beyond them? How can freedom exist in an order of necessary causation, or necessary causation in a universe which as a whole can have no cause beyond itself, and yet cannot be thought as altogether causeless? How can there be a self simple, permanent, and substantial when all that is known is known in complex relations? Is knowledge possible? Is there any self that knows? Or am I and my knowing alike illusory—the dreams of a dream? Do I know that I know? What is knowing—the knowing of knowing?

This is the multiform question of our time. First given philosophic utterance by Hume and Kant, it was repeated by Goethe with a great shout of poetry that caught the ear of the world. Then other strong voices took it up—Comte and Mansel with differing accents in religion, and Herbert Spencer in Physical Science, until at last colleges heard it, and novels and newspapers made it multitudinous, and now the cry is a clamor—a clamor that expresses the deepest longing of humanity, none the less a longing because its expression has a tone of despair. For the very despair of absolute knowledge implies an absolute in knowledge. Only by comparison with an absolute can any knowledge be known as not absolute. The mind must have an absolute standard in order to judge that any truth falls short of absoluteness. If this standard be false, its judgments must be false, and, therefore, are not to be credited when they pronounce any system of knowledge merely relative. But this standard cannot be pronounced false without assuming some other standard of absoluteness whereby to test it, and so asserting, in endless retrogression, the very truth it would deny.

Thus, in every act of declaring the Absolute unknowable, Agnosticism declares it already known. Its confusion comes from the fact that it has not brought into clear consciousness the hidden implications of its own thought. Its fault is not that it denies too much, but too little. It will find the Absolute it denies, whenever it makes its denial absolute. For such a denial denies itself. If

absolute knowledge be impossible, how can there be an absolute knowledge of its impossibility? Knowledge must itself be absolute in order to know that any of its special objects are only relative. In judging them relative, it simply asserts that they are partial or particular through lack of its own total form. Their antinomies are nothing but the failures of a part to include the Whole—of any single category of intelligence to equal intelligence itself. Thus, Space is a category of parts that are outside each other, and therefore it cannot apply to the Whole, which, as the Whole, can have nothing outside it. Time is a category of parts that succeed each other, and therefore it cannot apply to the Whole, which, as the Whole, has nothing else to precede or follow it. Cause and effect is a category of parts which change into each other, so that, given one, another must follow as its next phase by constraint of the whole—a law that evidently cannot govern the Whole itself, which cannot become other than it is, and has no higher Whole to constrain it. Instead, then, of accepting these categories as final, modern doubt must be thorough enough to doubt them. They, too, no less than the truths they bring into contradiction, are contradictory. Why should absolute knowledge be criticised by canons of Space and Time and Causation, and they left entirely unquestioned, as if each of them were an independent and well-known Absolute? What is this but the *superstition* of Agnosticism? To deny one god it has to assert many gods. It vacates Heaven for Olympus. But even Olympus has a Jove, and perhaps among these categorical Absolutes one may be found of Jovian rank. Which is it? Can Space account for Time, or Time for Space, or both for Causation, or Causation for either or both of them? Is Space or Time a cause, or can Causation work out of Space and before Time to produce either or both of them? And if they confess ignorance of each other, what right have they to sit in judgment on the very nature of knowledge? Does not their mutual ignorance prove their need of some generative principle higher than they, to relate them to each other, and give them the co-ordination and unity of knowledge? For they are certainly one in that they are *known*. Knowledge has somewhere a law for their being—a heat that can melt their stiff, hard, dogmatic forms, and make them flow together. They cannot stand the test of absoluteness. Try any of them by that test,

and forthwith the flow begins of one category into others, and finds no rest except in the oceanic fulness of Thought itself. Make Space absolute, and it changes into Time; for Space is pure externality, and absolute externality would be external to itself, and, therefore, pure internality, which is what it is only by this process of self-negation, so that its outer or static being ceases as fast as it begins. And what is this blank abstraction of Becoming but Time—the Saturn who lives by eating up his own offspring? Make Time absolute or whole, and it changes into Eternity. For a whole of Time must contain at once all times, having no beyond whence the Future can come into the Present, or whither the Present can go out as the Past; Past and Future must be always present within it; it is their eternal Now. So, too, with Cause and Effect, which are but this necessary transition of Space into Time, of co-existence into succession through things. Make Causation absolute, and it must cause itself, and so be its own effect—an effect that is the cause of its own causing. But this is only possible when a final cause or conscious end precedes and prompts its own realization, or, more completely, as self-consciousness, which is the absolute form of thought. Test it and see.

Think, if you can, of a space beyond the reach of Thought; as soon as you *think* it, the space beyond thought is a thought. Think, if you can, of a time when Thought was not born, or when it shall have died; as soon as you *think* it, it is a time of Thought which stands thus ever ready to play midwife at its own birth and sexton of its own burial. Think, if you can, a noumenon or thing in itself apart from its appearance to thought; as soon as you think it, the thing that was to be in itself, and out of Thought, comes out of itself into Thought. So, too, Matter, which is by some supposed to be the source of Mind, cannot be thought as other than a thought. All feelings, intuitions, imaginings, volitions, loves, must be regarded as modes of thought which can only *think* them as among its many kinds of action. Nor is the thinker himself excepted; he too is Thought—Thought come full circle, and containing all possible phases within its perfect orb. How can he think himself except as the very self of Thought? Thought is the absolute, the all.

And this is St. Anselm's proof of the existence of God. God, he says, is that being than whom no greater can be thought. But

if that being than whom no greater can be thought lack reality, then a being can be thought greater than it by the addition of existence in reality to mere existence in the mind. In other words, absolute Thought must contain reality, which cannot be conceived as out of Thought; for even there it would be still within the thought that *thinks* it as out of Thought. And this absolute Thought which contains all reality within itself is God. To object to this argument that the conception of a hundred dollars in the pocket does not put them there is to confuse a finite conception, which, because finite, is contingent, and may or may not have outward reality, with a universal and necessary idea, whose universality and necessity constitute objective existence. For objectivity simply means that which all minds think and must think, or do violence to the very nature of Thought. One does not need to compare a triangle within the mind to a triangle without the mind to discover that everywhere in the universe, and no matter what its shape, its angles are equal, really as well as ideally, to two right angles.

Do you call this Idealism? I answer that if you cannot think any reality which is not brought within Thought by the very act of thinking it, this Idealism is just as much Realism. Do you charge that it violates Common-Sense? I answer, So does the motion of the earth about the sun; so do the hues of the landscape which are not in the landscape, but in the light that palpitates against your eye; so, indeed, does all Science, for Common-Sense is but another name for unscientific sense.

Thought, then, is all and infinite. And this is precisely what the Agnostics confess unawares when they say they know that the Infinite *is* without knowing *what* it is: whereby they mean that none of the particular determinations of knowledge equal its universal activity. If they would look a little deeper into the nature of this knowledge, they would see that to know that the Infinite *is* implies, at least, the knowledge of infinite *Being*; that infinite Being in knowledge, which has no further determinations, is simply the Being of Knowledge itself; that, if Knowledge alone be infinite, it can have no infinite object but itself, and that, in having itself for object, its determination does not limit or narrow its activity—in a word, that self-knowledge or self-consciousness is the infinite characterization of any Infinite that can be known to

be. But infinite self-consciousness means infinite personality, or God.

Such a God cannot be the formless identity or substance of Pantheism. He *is* only as He knows himself, and His self-knowing generates distinction within His identity. As knowing, He is active; as known, passive: as knowing, essence; as known, existence: as knowing, idea; as known, image: as knowing, spirit; as known, Nature: for the self that is known gives to its entire content the note of Otherness that marks its relation to the knowing self, which in knowing keeps the subjective form of identity; and this note of Otherness is the characteristic of Nature. Nature has no inherent being. Its stablest things are transient. They never pause in any one condition. They cease while they begin, and their ceasing is the beginning of other ceasings like their own. And whether we view them as the ceasing of those things from which they begin, or the beginning of those things into which they cease, their existence is elsewhere than in themselves. They are but the wing-beats of a restless flight that says at every point it passes, "Not here, nor here, nor here; my destiny is the Elsewhere, which I am always reaching, yet can never reach." They shift and melt into each other like the colors of sunset. Colors they are—the perpetual after-glow of a sun that shines below the horizon of sense. That sun is the whole of Nature's process, which, while changing its phases or phenomena, keeps in them ever equal to itself, and abides. And this whole is the other self of God, whose law is change, because its being is to be *other*; whose changes remain within its unity, because, though other, it is still a *self*; and whose order of changing is from the utmost otherness and evanescence of finitude towards the divine form of an all-containing, and hence permanent, unity, because it is the other self of *God*. As sang Synesius, the Platonic bishop of the Early Church:

Thou art the begetting
And the begotten.
Thou art the illumining
And the illumined.
Thou art the manifest
And the hidden—hid by Thy glories
One and yet all things, Thou.

One in Thyself alone,
And throughout all things, One.¹

Towards this summit unity—all things certainly *do* aspire, from the mud of subsident oceans to man, who, born of Nature, yet has Nature's wholeness in his knowledge, who knows himself, and in such cognition has the image of God; yea, more, who apprehends God, and thereby reveals that in man, as the perfection, total significance, and Christ of Nature, God apprehends the self of God. Says Meister Eckhart, meaning by *I* not an exceptional Ego, but every Ego that has been, is, or shall be: "God and *I* are one in knowing. God's essence is His knowing, and God's knowing makes me to know Him. Therefore is His knowing my knowing. The eye whereby I see God is the same eye whereby He seeth me. Mine eye and the eye of God are one eye, one vision, one knowledge, and one love." And a greater than Eckhart says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. . . . In Him was life, and the life was the *light* of men. . . . This is the true Light that lighteth *every man* that cometh into the world."

For God cannot know Himself correctly unless the self known is in every respect the same as the self that knows—intelligent as well as intelligible, essence as well as existence, Reason as well as Word. Hence, the complete form of His consciousness is no longer as object against subject, but as subject-object, no longer as self other to self, but as a self whose very selfhood is knowledge of self. And neither the first nor the second self could have subsisted unless from eternity each of them had been subject-object or personality like that third which brings them together; while

¹ Σὺ τὸ τίκτον ἔφυς
Σὺ τὸ τικτόμενον
Σὺ τὸ φωτίζον
Σὺ τὸ λαμπρόμενον
Σὺ τὸ φαινόμενον
Σὺ τὸ κρυπτόμενον
Ἰδιαίς ἀργαῖς
Ἐν καὶ πάντα
Ἐν καθ' ἑαυτὸ
Καὶ διὰ πάντων.

all three personalities exist as such only in one and the same act of eternal self-consciousness. Wherefore there can be no Absolute that is not tri-personal, no God except a Trinity, knowing as Father, known as Son, and recognition in the Holy Ghost. Be careful to note that this divine Intelligence is not by successive stages, as if in Time. Time is change, and change is the fate of finite things which do not include all their possibilities in their individual forms, and must perish to realize them; the swamp-fern perishing to become peat, the peat perishing to become flame, and the flame losing its entity in the air. But divine Intelligence is always, and by the same act, distinction and unity of distinction—a total process that forever returns to itself, that ends in its beginning, and begins in its ending, like a whirlpool whose waters rise as they descend, and coil to their centre while rounding out to their rim; or, better still, like the rainbow Dante saw as the highest glory of Heaven. “Within,” he tells us,

“the deep and luminous subsistence
Of the High Light appeared to me three circles
Of threefold color and of one dimension,
And by the second seemed the first reflected,
As Iris is by Iris, and the third
Seemed fire that equally from both is breathed.
O Light eterne! sole in thyself that dwellest,
Sole knowest thyself and known unto thyself,
And knowing, lovest and smilest on thyself.
That circulation, which being thus conceived,
Appeared in thee as a reflected light,
When somewhat contemplated by mine eyes,
Within itself of its own very color
Seemed painted with our effigy.”

Here, then, Philosophy and Religion meet. Within the triple rainbow of Religion, Philosophy sees the effigy of Reason. And the Agnostic also might see it but for a mental squint caused by using two distinct and contrary meanings of Relativity as one and the same. For Knowledge may be considered relative as related to an Absolute beyond its reach—in which sense it would be relative only because imperfect; or it may be considered relative as involving relation in its very nature. Now, the latter con-

ception is true. It is true that knowing is essentially relating, the discovery of difference in identity and of identity in difference; and, consequently, that all knowledge, the most perfect knowledge, must be a knowledge of relations. But, if perfect knowledge be a knowing of relations, knowledge cannot be called, as the Agnostic calls it, relative in the sense of imperfection because it does not know the unrelated. As well call it relative because it cannot understand the false to be the true. It is the perfection, not the imperfection, of Reason that it cannot think what contradicts its nature, and by such contradiction is proved absurd. The unthinkable is the absurd, not the absolute, unless the latter be absolute absurdity. But even the mock Absolute of the Agnostic is not quite so relationless as he conjectures. Though out of knowledge, it still stands in some relation to knowledge; for *out* is a relation as well as *in*, and to be known as out of knowledge is to fall within the relations of that knowing which knows it to be out of knowledge. And within these relations it is easily and well understood as Nonsense—an abstraction blown out to illimitable bulk by the gas of its utter deadness. Its nameless Name is *Nothing*. No wonder that the worship of its votaries is chiefly of the *silent* sort.

But though an Absolute of no-relation can only be understood as the Nothing which it is, the Absolute of Self-relation fills and satisfies alike the mind of Religion and Philosophy. True, they behold its glory with distinct visions—Religion at first sight, Philosophy only after inferring its existence as a reflection of divine thought, and then looking for its triple reciprocity of radiance; but neither vision will be perfect until it sees through the other's eyes, and Religion becomes philosophic, while Philosophy grows devout. Nor need Religion fear that philosophic analysis will take aught of reality or beauty from her imaginative beholding of Truth. As the earthly rainbow does not lose, but gains reality and beauty by having its woof of sunbeams unravelled and rewoven by science in a manner that shows the fine art of the sun in its ethereal tapestry, so the reflection of divine truth appears not less, but more divine and true when the Mind which it reflects evinces itself as mind to mind, and by this self-evincing proves the correspondence of the image with its rational archetype. It is not Philosophy, but philosophic blindness, that abandons the image of

divine truth in seeking an imageless light behind it. No doubt it is the light that makes the image, yet but for the image with its many colors there would be no manifestation of the light. God is not rightly known unless known in every degree of his self-revelation—in feeling, in imagination, and in the concepts of the understanding as well as in pure reason. Indeed, that reason alone is pure which thinks Him in the entirety of His communion with man's entire character.

What Religion has to fear, then, is not so much that Philosophy will fail to think her creed, as that, through ignorance of Philosophy, she will fail to let her creed be thought. If, mistaking her symbols for ultimate definitions, she attempts to formulate them into a logical system, she will defeat her own end, and cause doubt rather than conviction. Symbols reveal, but do not define, God—as rocks, hills, rivers, clouds, landscapes, reveal, but do not define, the soul of Nature. Symbols are for worship, not for argument. Worship sees God through them, but argument takes them as God's very self, and, by thus making their finite and mediate forms infinite, encounters hopeless contradiction. And just in this sorry posture you will find what are called the evidences of Christianity. For want of a philosophy of religion they are confounding symbolic with rational truth, and trying to demonstrate the existence of Infinite Spirit by categories of Sense that necessarily finitize Him into a mere phenomenon. Then, in order to save at least an appearance of infinitude in this utter finitizing of his nature, the phenomenon is magnified without bounds so as to seem an infinite phenomenon, which is only another name for infinite absurdity.

Thus Apologists, who never dream of taking creation literally as a series of explosions of divine breath in Hebrew sounds, will argue, as if pleading for the life of religion, that there are tokens of design in Nature which prove the existence of an all-wise Designer—an argument that regards Nature as some waste, unmanageable stuff, which only marvellous cunning could turn to account. For if the stuff had been alive with an interior aim which it was to evolve as the seed evolves the tree, it would have needed no external designer to shape it to some strange end. But if not alive with its own organic purpose—if only dead matter that needed rare ingenuity to overcome its stubbornness and util-

ize its waste—the question arises, “Who created it so? The God whose wisdom is displayed in adapting it as a means to an ulterior end?” Then his wisdom must consist in repairing the blunder of his first creation. For the wisdom of design is measured by the difficulties it overcomes. If to overcome them shows infinite wisdom, to have created them shows infinite folly; and thus the argument of Design only proves God to be all-wise by first proving Him to be all-foolish.

Moreover, the very conception of Creation, while good as a symbol of the truth that Nature has no existence independent of God, likewise leads to contradiction as soon as it is employed as an exact and final explanation of Nature’s becoming. It pictures God as existing in Time before Nature, as if He were subject to change, and had spent countless ages in indolence or sleep, or some other mood of virtual nonentity, before He began to do anything that would denote divine activity, and then, when He began to act, His action created a universe that was outside of Him, and bounded Him, and so put a cage over that infinitude which He had enjoyed during His long solitary pre-creation slumber; that is to say, He ceased to be God as soon as He became creator.

Equally sad are the attempts to demonstrate, in evidence of Christianity, that God is the great First Cause, as if in a chain of causes which are each the effect of some previous cause, any one effect rather than another could be arbitrarily seized as causeless, and called First Cause, or as if the God who were truly First Cause were not also second and third and thirteen-thousandth. All finite representations of the Infinite as cause, or as subject to change, like a thing, bring him under the categories of Physical Science, and Physical Science speaks the exact truth when it says that Nature has no place for such a fictitious God—not a crack broad as the edge of a knife-blade, between phenomenon and phenomenon, in which he might by any possibility lie hidden. God belongs to a higher category than any that controls the thinking of *things*. He is absolute Mind itself—the Mind which thinks all categories, as well as the things which are known under their laws. He is not a designer external to Nature, because Nature is nothing but His thought. He is not a creator who begins in Time to make worlds, because his eternal thinking has been eternally manifest in thoughts which constitute the Universe. He is not

first cause, because he is also last effect; Himself the effect of His own causing.

“Thou seekest Him in globe and galaxy,
He hides in pure transparency;
Thou askest in fountains and in fires,
He is the Essence that inquires.”

And it is only as Essential Reason, without as well as within the reason which inquires—that He can ever be rationally demonstrated; for any other idea of Him, however attractive in picturing His relation to Nature or Man, must prove unequal to his Godhead. By what method, then, shall this demonstration proceed? Surely not by deduction from finite Nature, according to the fashion which our modern evidences of Christianity have borrowed from the Science of Things. For by such deduction God would not be self-grounded, but would have the ground of his being in things. He would depend on them, not they on Him. They would be the supreme reality, He the sentimental inference.

There is another method of demonstration. The Church followed it, though with steps that often halted or strayed, in the Middle Ages, when her theologians had such names as Scotus Eriugena and Bonaventura, Anselm and Albertus Magnus, Thomas of Aquin and Eckhart—saints of the intellect as well as of the heart. It is the method of philosophy which post-Kantian thinkers have opened through to its end, so that demonstration need not halt nor stray in it any more. It shows, by a dialectic which carries on each partial thought to what it lacks of completeness, that things have no substantial being of their own—that they are fugitive appearances of a Whole which is not merely their sum, but an organic unity present in them everywhere, and abiding through all their swift transitions; that this organic unity or Whole, which, as the Whole, has naught beyond it to determine it, must be self-determining, and, if self-determining, then infinite Reason—since Reason is the sole self-determining power known to man, or within the possibility of thought; that, hence, all natural appearances are appearances or revelations of this infinite Reason, which reveals itself not only in Nature but in Man, who grows with the gradual revelation through a crescent order of religions culminating in Christianity, for Christianity comprehends

all their scattered and imperfect symbols in its one perfect symbol—perfect, because both symbol and the essential truth symbolized, identifying, as it does, the divine with the human mind in its God-man, the Christ.

Until Christianity is thus demonstrated, men who demand the reason of faith will continue to doubt its absolute claims. But whenever this demonstration shall be made popular—as it may be, by press and pulpit, to a public intelligence, which, meanwhile, however, will have to learn other than empirical modes of thought—then our epoch of doubt shall give way to an epoch of holier faith than the world has yet seen—a faith that shall be knowledge, knowledge of the Most High Reason by reason, leaving naught in the universe alien to man, bringing his Heaven down to earth and making every moment of his time eternal with the eternal truths and principles that fill it, rebuilding the Church, now half in ruins, on the firmer foundation, and under the serener sky of his own spirit, with an architecture of thought more ornate and aspiring than was ever typed by cathedral of stone, and for a worship whose silences shall be full of harmony, and whose songs shall seem audible echoes of the voice of God.

GOD AS THE ETERNALLY BEGOTTEN SON.

HEGEL'S "PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION." THIRD PART, "THE ABSOLUTE RELIGION," II, 3.
TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY F. LOUIS SOLDAN.

2. The next point is, that the two are identical, this inadequacy (incompatibility) notwithstanding, and that the alienation, the weakness, and frailty of human nature, cannot detract from that unity which is the substantial element in the reconciliation.

We have recognized all this in the divine idea: for the son is other than the father, and this Otherness or Alienation is difference, or it could not be spirit. But the Other is God, and has all the fulness of divine nature in it, and the attribute of alienation does not detract from the fact that this Other is the son of God,